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A photo lab on your desk
U.S. News & World Report; Washington; Nov 25, 1996; Thomas, Susan Gregory;

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	MetaTools Kais Power Goo
	MGI PhotoSuite
	Logitech ScanMan Color
	Adobe PhotoDeluxe

Abstract:

Thomas reviews several personal imaging software and hardware products: Picture It] from ⓘMicrosoft; Adobe PhotoDeluxe from ⓘAdobe Systems; PhotoSuite from MGI Software; Kai's Power Goo from MetaTools; the Logitech ScanMan Color; the ⓘCanon BJC-4200 color printer; the ⓘHewlett-Packard HP DeskJet 693C color printer; the Epson Stylus Color 500 color printer; and the Lexmark 2050 Color Jetprinter.

Full Text:

[Headnote]
Get creative with your pictures, then print them out at home. It's easy

There's at least one in every family photo album: the snapshot that transformed your sweetly smiling brood into a coven of vampires with glowing eyes. Mercifully, getting the red out is now, well, a snap.

Suddenly home desktops are doubling as darkrooms. New "personal imaging" software has given amateur photographers professional tools not only for touching up pictures but also for adding special effects and designing fun, campy gifts like calendars, cards, collages and mugs. Color inkjet printers, many of them available for less than $350, are billed as "photo-realistic" because they use special ink cartridges and papers to produce high-resolution printouts.

While photos that are digitally developed and printed at home may not be up to the standards of prints made from film, they are pleasingly crisp and subtly colored. Photo shops are getting into the act, too. Many film finishers now offer to return shots that have been taken with conventional cameras to you on special **CD-ROMs** or floppy disks or upload your shots to sites on the World Wide Web. Users can edit the digital images and then send them back to order final prints.

Technophobes, this hobby just might cure your fears forever. The process is surprisingly uncomplicated. You feed a photo into a scanner, storing it as a digital file on your hard disk. Launch your personal imaging software, open up the image and tinker away. Then print it out, and that's it.

Playing darkroom expert is not a cheap proposition. You'll pay more per print than if you dropped off your rolls of film at the drugstore, and any time gained because you don't have to wait in line will be dribbled away in fiddling at the computer.

But this stuff is serious fun. For devoted weekend photographers, the fun is in the fine-tuning that is possible. You can sharpen the focus on fuzzy photos, crop awkwardly shot pictures and erase scratches. For casual snapshooters, it's like a trip to a boardwalk photo booth. Not only can you place pictures against different backgrounds-there's you grinning sheepishly on the cover of a major newsweekly, your smitten visage smack in the middle of a big, red valentine heart!-but you can morph, swirl, stretch and squish photos any which way you please. And losing 10 quick pounds before sending a photo of yourself to your alma mater's newsletter has never been easier.

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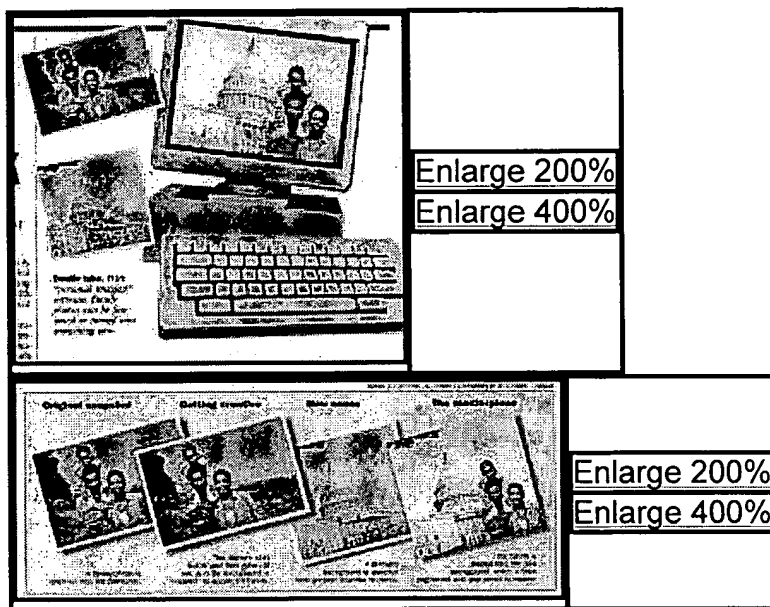
Of the several software packages on the market, Picture It! (⑦Microsoft, Windows 95 **CD-ROM**, $79) and Adobe PhotoDeluxe (⑦Adobe Systems, Windows 3.1 or better/Macintosh **CD-ROM**, $49) are particularly elegant and simple to use. Both programs walk you through step by step, from opening up images you scan in or download from the Web to correcting flaws and adding creative flourishes. Once you've applied the finishing touches, you can save your pictures either in a low-resolution format to post on a personal home page or E-mail to a pal or in high resolution for printing. Each also has a number of sophisticated but unintimidating tools, as well as an extensive library of stock images and clip art. PhotoSuite (MGI Software, Windows 3.1/95 **CD-ROM**, $79.95) provides a more sophisticated palette of tools, similar to those in high-end imaging programs like Adobe PhotoShop. It is harder to use but yields more control to those who understand how to command it. And for freehand goofing, smudging and nudging, nothing beats Kai's Power Goo (MetaTools, Windows 95/Macintosh, $49), which turns photos into virtual Silly Putty in your hands (or, rather, your mouse).

Sucking up bits. All such programs presume you've already stored pictures on your computer's hard disk. There are several ways to do that; one HewlettPackard PC, the HP Pavilion 7280P, comes with a scanner built in. But you don't have to buy an entire computer for the convenience of digitizing photos, particularly when good hand-held color scanners are available for under $200. Running these gizmos, which look something like miniature vacuum cleaners, over a photo whooshes the image into your computer, where you can open it as a digital file and edit it with your chosen personal-imaging software package.

Should you go this route, it's wise to buy a scanner that reads text as well as graphics so you can use it for business and schoolwork (files, receipts and passages from books, for instance) as well as pleasure. The $199 Logitech ScanMan Color fills the bill nicely. A flatbed scanner that sits on a desktop and scans in a page or more

at a time will run about $50 to $200 more.

Photographers who would just as soon skip scanning altogether and are dedicated enough to pay a premium to pursue their hobby might consider buying a digital camera. Storing pictures in memory, these gadgets let you transfer photos directly to your PC. All major camera companies, as well as computer manufacturers Apple and ⑦Epson, make digital cameras. They cost between $300 and $850.

Then there's the let-someone-elsedo-the-grunt-work approach. Photo finishers from **Kodak** to your local driveby snapshot shop will digitize your pictures and store them online or save them on a disk. Or get them developed on the Web. For $2 to $5 per 24-exposure roll, you can send your pictures via mail to **PhotoNet** (http://www.**photonet** .com), an online network of camera stores; they will be developed, scanned in and uploaded to a password-protected Web site. You will be notified via Email when they are ready (usually in 24 hours). Within 30 days, you can decide which images you'd like to download and touch up using your own software. When you're finished, you can upload the edited images to **PhotoNet**, along with orders for professional prints at a cost of $6 to $10 per 24 prints.

Or you can print your own. For $10 to $20, many photo finishers will digitally save your roll on a **CD-ROM** in a special format developed by **Kodak** called FlashPix, which any of the personal imaging packages can read. You can store more than 100 digital exposures on one of these disks, so you don't have to buy a new **CD-ROM** for every roll of film.

Many inexpensive inkjet printers now use color and special photo-ink cartridges, as well as high resolution and glossy film paper, to produce richly textured four-color prints, albeit not as sharp and true as regular photographs. The ⑦Canon BJC-4200 ($279), ⑦Hewlett-Packard's HP DeskJet 693C ($349), Epson Stylus Color 500 ($329) and Lexmark 2050 Color Jetprinter ($250)-which will upgrade to six-color printing by the end of the year for even more realism-all are excellent choices.

It's the extras that will cost you. Photo ink cartridges generally run about $40 and last about 100 sheets. The special paper needed to produce near photo-realistic quality can cost more than a dollar per sheet. Add that up, and you're talking up to $1.50 per printed image. And crafts materials such as T-shirt iron-on transfers and fabric sheets run in that range, too. Of course, you don't have to print out your pictures on photographic paper; if it's not for a special occasion, printing on extra smooth white paper, even regular copier paper, will do.

Early next year, you'll be able to print high-quality pictures straight from the Web. And before too long, you may be able to insert a photo disk into a kiosk at the mall and get pictures back instantly. And maybe after that, we'll see a product that stops red-eye before it happens.

BY SUSAN GREGORY THOMAS

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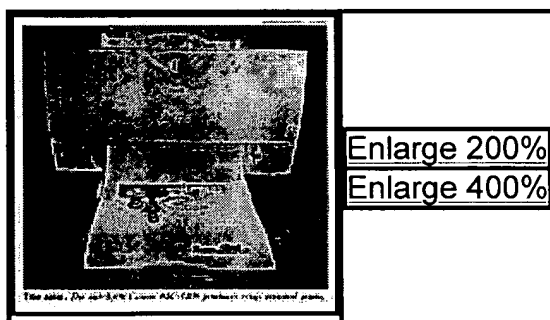
True color. The sub-$300 Canon BJC-4200 produces crisp, textured prints.

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New development: Web photos
Florida Times Union; Jacksonville; Aug 9, 1998; Ed Stansel, Tech Talk editor;

Sub Title: [CITY Edition]
Start Page: H-3
Abstract:

Of course, you'll want to share your vacation snapshots with relatives and friends. But before you order duplicate prints, search the film envelope for another option: digital photos.

Check the appropriate box and, for about $5 extra, you'll receive not only the usual prints and negatives, but an online photo album accessible by anyone on the Web -- that is, anyone to whom you've provided your secret code.

***PhotoNet** (www.**kodak.photonet**.com) now reaches more than 30,000 processing locations, including ⓘAlbertson's, ⓘEckerd, ⓘKmart, Target, ⓘPublix, ⓘWalgreen and Wolf Camera and Video stores in the Jacksonville area. **PhotoNet** service also is offered by mail-order processors Mystic Color Lab and York Photo Labs.*

Full Text:

Summer is winding down, leaving us with vacation memories, lingering sunburns, well-worn credit cards and rolls of film awaiting processing.

Of course, you'll want to share your vacation snapshots with relatives and friends. But before you order duplicate prints, search the film envelope for another option: digital photos.

Check the appropriate box and, for about $5 extra, you'll receive not only the usual prints and negatives, but an online photo album accessible by anyone on the Web -- that is, anyone to whom you've provided your secret code.

And if Aunt Edna in Albuquerque sees a picture she likes in the Internet album, she can order a print herself -- with her own credit card.

While the digital photo option isn't available at all film drop-off locations, it's bound to become more commonplace as ⓘAmerica Online rolls out its "You've Got Pictures" service to its 12.5 million members this fall.

"You've Got Pictures" will be offered through **Kodak PhotoNet**, whose services currently are available to all Internet-connected consumers.

PhotoNet (www.**kodak.photonet**.com) now reaches more than 30,000 processing locations, including ⓘAlbertson's, ⓘEckerd, ⓘKmart, Target, ⓘPublix, ⓘWalgreen and Wolf Camera and Video stores in the Jacksonville area. **PhotoNet** service also is offered by mail-order processors Mystic Color Lab and York Photo Labs.

'PhotoNet was created in March when Kodak bought a majority stake in PictureVision Inc. and merged it with its own, smaller Web photo service. Some processing envelopes still bear the old name, Kodak Picture Network.

While Kodak dominates the online picture business now, it's getting some competition from its archrival, ⑦Fuji Photo Film. ⑦Fuji launched its Fujifilm.Net service (www.fujifilm.net) in February in California and New York and plans to roll it out nationwide next month at outlets including ⑦Wal-Mart.

Both services charge about $5 to scan a 24-exposure roll of film -- a process that adds a few days to the normal developing time.

Customers receive their secret access codes when they pick up their prints. Anyone who has the code can view the pictures online, download photos to their hard drives, send photos via e-mail and order reprints or even T-shirts and coffee mugs decorated with their favorite photo. No one can access the pictures without the authorization code.

Both PhotoNet and Fujifilm.Net store photos on the Web for 30 days and charge extra to keep them online longer.

PhotoNet requires no special software to personalize online photo albums, including adding or removing pictures and writing captions for each photo.

Fujifilm.Net users download the free Fujifilm Album software to organize their pictures and post their albums on the Web.

A similar service, PhotoMail is offered by Seattle FilmWorks via mail order (www.filmworks.com).

Terri Demski of Middleburg said she recently used FilmWorks to view photos her sister-in-law had taken and was impressed with how easy it was to download photos and arrange them using free photo-album software.

"I always hate the task of sorting through the photos -- which ones are for Grandma, Mom, aunts, etc. -- and this way everyone can view them and store them in an album on their computer," Demski said.

Many processors also offer the option of having pictures scanned and transferred to floppy disk or CD-ROM.

[Illustration]
Photo; Special Photo: (b/w) Kodak PhotoNet lets users view pictures, download them and order prints.